

**SCOPING INFORMATION DOCUMENT**  
White Bird Allotment Cattle Conversion and Seeding Proposal  
Cottonwood Field Office  
DOI-BLM-ID-C020-0008-EA

This information document summarizes a Bureau of Land Management (BLM) proposal to respond to a grazing application submitted by the lessee. The application is to grazing cattle on the White Bird Allotment #36292 near White Bird, Idaho in Idaho County (see attached map). The allotment is currently allocated for grazing of horses so the application necessitates a conversion of the type use from horses to cattle as well as change in use dates and numbers. The lessee also proposes to improve the poor condition plant communities currently on the allotment by seeding with perennial grasses. The grass will be broadcast spread in the spring when cattle are present and hoof action can be utilized to incorporate the seed into the soil. The BLM will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) which will describe the environmental effects of the proposal and we invite public comments for consideration in our analysis.

**Background**

The 39 acre White Bird Allotment is custodial management category allotment located in an area of mostly private land that has a history of heavy livestock use. As a result, plant communities on the allotment are generally in poor ecological condition and plants present are primarily invasive annual grasses and broadleaf weeds such as common crupina and yellow starthistle. Remnant perennial bunchgrasses including bluebunch wheatgrass, sand dropseed and purple three-awn do occur in protected areas and on steep rocky slopes not typically utilized by livestock. The previous leasee grazed horses on the allotment but the current lessee would like to winter cattle on their private lands, upslope from the allotment where they will be fed thru the winter. Cattle will have incidental use of the downslope BLM lands until moved to spring and summer pasture.

One unnamed, intermittent, non-fish-bearing tributary stream of the Salmon River flows across the allotment. A fence keeps cattle upslope of old highway 95, now a county road, and livestock do not have access to the Salmon River. A buck and pole fence surrounds French Cemetery which occurs in the allotment restricting cattle access to the site.

**Preliminary Purpose and Need for Action**

The need for the action is to respond to an application for grazing use on the White Bird Allotment.

The purpose of the action is to implement direction as described in the Cottonwood Resource Management Plan (RMP), approved December 21, 2009. It is consistent with the following decisions from the RMP:

**Goal LG-1**—Provide opportunities for grazing while meeting rangeland health standards.

**Objective LG-1.1**—Identify lands available for livestock grazing.

**Action LG-1.1.1**—Continue grazing on existing allotments as identified in the Northern Idaho Grazing Management EIS (BLM 1981b). . .

The RMP allocates 6 AUMS of forage for the White Bird Allotment #36292.

**Objective VN-1.2**—Plant communities dominated by nonnative annual plants will be managed to promote soil stability and rehabilitation opportunities.

**Action VN-1.2.3**—Implement actions to accomplish the conversion of nonnative plant communities to desired plant communities. Consider the use of available technologies and plant materials to achieve the desired outcome.

## **Preliminary Proposed Action and Alternatives**

### **Proposed Action**

Authorize grazing on the White Bird Allotment as requested by the applicant as shown in **Table 1. Requested Grazing Use**.

**Table 1. Requested Grazing Use**

Allotment		Livestock		Period		% PL <sup>1</sup>	Type Use	AUMs <sup>2</sup>
Name	Number	Number	Kind	Begin	End			
White Bird	36292	100	Cattle	12/15	02/28	5	Custodial <sup>3</sup>	4
White Bird	36292	100	Cattle	03/01	04/15	5	Custodial	2

<sup>1</sup> %PL: Percent forage from public land

<sup>2</sup> AUM: Animal Unit Month – the amount of forage to sustain an animal for one month

<sup>3</sup> Custodial type use allows override of the AUM calculation in BLM's Rangeland Administration System (RAS) in order to allow flexibility in the season of use and livestock numbers utilizing the AUMs allocated for the allotment.

The lessee would like to introduce perennial grass seed to poor condition sites within the allotment in an attempt to improve forage productivity and provide a desired perennial plant component. Seed may be introduced wherever invasive annual grasses and forbs are the primary plants present. This would be accomplished by broadcast spreading seed just prior to removal of cattle in the spring so hoof action can be utilized to incorporate the seed into the soil surface. This seeding may take place initially over two years, then may be maintained as needed after initial establishment.

### **No Action**

Deny the application to convert the use from horses to cattle and maintain the current lease authorization which is as shown on **Table 2, Current Grazing Use**. The range improvement seeding on the White Bird Allotment would not be authorized.

**Table 2. Current Grazing Use**

Allotment		Livestock		Period		% PL	Type Use	AUMs
Name	Number	Number	Kind	Begin	End			
White Bird	36292	6	Horse	04/01	06/15	20	Active	3
White Bird	36292	6	Horse	10/15	01/01	20	Active	3

## **Preliminary Issues**

The BLM has identified the following potential issues for analysis related to the proposal.

- Would the change in livestock type, duration of use, and number of authorized animals result in unacceptable impact to cultural or historical resources?

- Would there be unacceptable impact to remaining native vegetation on the allotment as a result of the new grazing authorization?
- Would the change in duration and intensity of livestock use cause unacceptable impacts to soil resources?
- What impacts, if any, would occur to water quality or riparian conditions as a result in the authorized use change?

### **Public Input Requested**

Federal actions must be analyzed in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations to determine potential environmental consequences.

The purpose of this document is to inform interested and affected parties of the proposal and to solicit comments to assist with the NEPA review of the proposal. As previously mentioned, the BLM will document our analysis of the proposal in an EA. Comments received in response to this solicitation may be used to identify potential environmental issues related to the proposed action or alternatives to the proposed action as we prepare the EA.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will also use this public participation opportunity under the NEPA to assist the agency in satisfying the public involvement requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470(f)) pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). The information about historic and cultural resources within the area potentially affected by the proposed action will assist the BLM in identifying and evaluating impacts to such resources in the context of both NEPA and Section 106 of the NHPA.

The BLM will consult with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis in accordance with Executive Order 13175 and other policies. Tribal concerns, including impacts on Indian trust assets and potential impacts to cultural resources, will be given due consideration.

We invite Federal, State, and local agencies, as well as tribes and other stakeholders interested in, or affected by the proposed action to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, to request participation in the development of the environmental analysis as a cooperating agency.

The BLM invites comments from the public on the proposed action, preliminary issues, and alternatives. Comments made on this proposal would be **most helpful if they are received by July 18, 2022**, and are directly relevant to the proposal and project area.

Comments may be submitted through the [White Bird Allotment](#) project website on the BLM National NEPA register or through the contact information shown below. Please identify whether you are submitting comments as an individual or as the designated spokesperson on behalf of an organization. Issues that are outside the scope of the proposal will not be addressed at this planning level.

*Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.*

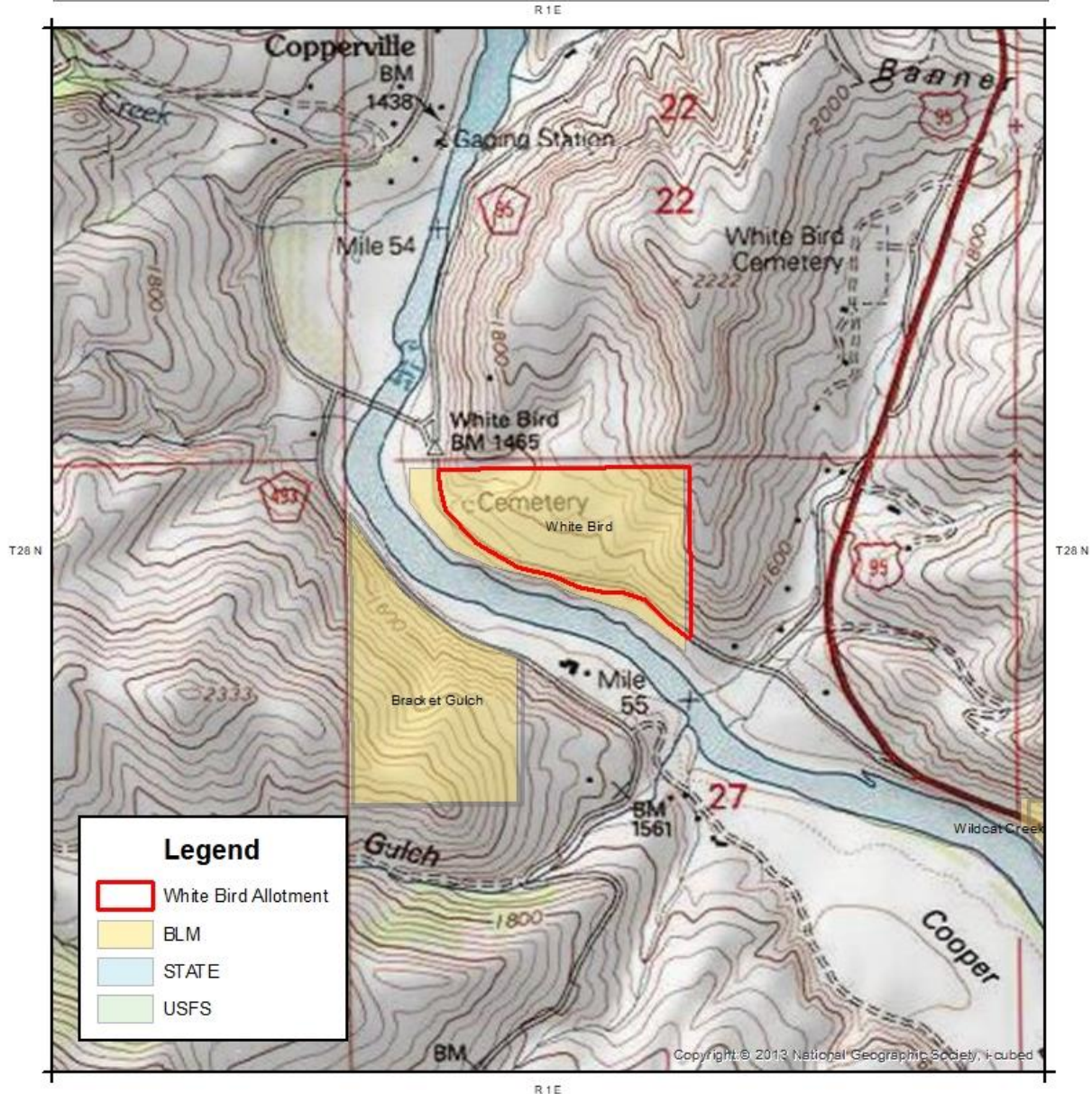
**Contact**

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**Attachment:**

- 1- Allotment Map

# White Bird Allotment #36292



Map Created: 6/27/2019

The surface management status ("land ownership") should be used as a general guide only. Official land records, located at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other offices, should be checked for up-to-date information concerning any specific tract of land.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management. The accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data is not guaranteed. The following cannot be made Section 508 compliant. For help with this data or information, please contact the BLM Idaho State Office Webmaster at 208-373-4000.

1:12,500  
Map Projection: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 11N

